



United States Department of Agriculture

**Forest Service**

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# Hoosier NF Highlights

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## Hike the Hoosier National Forest



By Vicki Gullang-Harris, Recreation Program Manager

The Hoosier National Forest provides a variety of multiple-use trail opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. There are also 50 miles of hiking-only trails.

**Brownstown Ranger District** –The out-and-back **Fork Ridge** Trail is just over three miles. The north end offers panoramic views of the valley, while the south end provides a quiet hike along a wooded ridgetop. **Pate Hollow** Trail, almost 7 miles long, is adjacent to IDNR's Paynetown Recreation Area and is used regularly by trail runners. It is also recommended for those looking for a more leisurely hike with interconnected loops for shorter or longer hikes, and views of Lake Monroe. Within Hardin Ridge Recreation Area (day use fees apply), the **Ted T. Turtle Interpretive Trail** starts near the amphitheater. Signs along this trail, which follows a creek down to Lake Monroe, interpret the history, geology, and wildlife common to southern Indiana. Beware though; this trail starts with 157 steps to the bottom. It is relatively gentle from there, but the final section, back to your starting point, has some steep sections! A good choice for a longer hike is the **Sycamore Loop** in the Charles C. Deam Wilderness. With over 38 miles of trail within the roughly 13,000 acre Wilderness, 5 miles of those are available for hiking only. The Sycamore trail is accessed from the parking

lot at the Hickory Ridge Fire Tower. **Tell City Ranger District** – Those looking for hiking opportunities in the southern portion of the Hoosier have several options as well. The **Buzzard Roost Trail** offers a short walk to a scenic overlook on the Ohio River, with a high, unobstructed view, and then continues downhill to the river. Coming back up is strenuous, but several benches are provided for a rest along the return trip. For those visiting or camping at Indian-Celina Lakes Recreation Area (day use /camping fees apply), a visit to the Rickenbaugh House and a hike on the **Celina Interpretive Trail** are a must! This interpretive trail offers 12 stops along the one mile length. The 2-mile hike around **German Ridge Lake** is a great option for those looking for an easy trail around a scenic lake. The trail starts and ends at the picnic and beach area, with historic 1930 era buildings constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps Just north of I-64, the **Hemlock Cliffs trail** offers a 1.5-mile loop. This unique trail offers a hike through a box canyon with sandstone formations, seasonal waterfalls, rare plants, and a rock shelter (please, no camping or fires within the rock shelter). Looking for something a bit longer? The almost 7-mile **Mogan Ridge East Trail** offers a hiking-only experience through scenic hardwoods with views of rock outcroppings. Farther north, just outside of Paoli, **Pioneer Mother's** Memorial Forest offers a 1-mile hike along a trail through old-growth forest. Closer to Tell City, the 2-mile hike around **Saddle Lake** may be one of the prettiest on the District. For those interested in a longer or overnight experience, the 15-mile **Two Lakes Trail** starts within the Indian-Celina Lakes Recreation Area (day use fees may apply). There are shorter loop options around each of the lakes. This hike has scenic lake views and rock outcrops.

There is something for everyone when hiking in Indiana's only National Forest. For more information please visit our website or contact Vicki Gullang-Harris at 812-275-5987 (vgullang@fs.fed.us).



View from Buzzard Roost vista along the hiking trail.



Waterfall along the Buzzard Roost Trail down to the Ohio River from top of the ridge.



Side hill trail at Two Lakes Trail.



Views from Lake Monroe from the Pate Hollow Trail.